

FIRE-SAFE CHECKLIST FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



Special populations such as older adults, people with disabilities, the deaf and hard of hearing and the visually impaired can significantly increase their chances of surviving a fire by practicing proven fire safety precautions.

Have a Sound Fire Safety and Escape Plan

It is vitally important to make and practice escape plans. In the event of a fire, remember, time is the biggest enemy and every second counts!

- ◆ Involve the assistance of a building manager, family member, or an entrusted friend when practicing your fire escape plan.
- ◆ Know at least two exits from every room.
- ◆ If you use a walker or wheelchair, check all exits to make sure they get through the doorways.
- ◆ Practice opening locked or barred doors and windows.
- ◆ When a fire occurs, do not waste any time saving property. Leave the home immediately. Dial 9-1-1 from a neighbor's house. Once out, stay out.

Develop a Home Fire Safety Plan

- ◆ If necessary, have a ramp available for emergency exits.
- ◆ Never use an elevator during a fire, unless instructed to do so by the fire department.
- ◆ Be sure your street address is clearly marked and visible from the street.

Inform Others of Your Special Needs

- ◆ Before the fire, contact your local fire department on a non-emergency telephone number and explain your special needs.

- ◆ Your local fire department will be able to help you with your escape plan and may also be able to perform a home fire safety inspection, as well as offer suggestions about smoke alarm placement and maintenance.
- ◆ Ask emergency providers to keep your special needs information on file.

Install and Maintain Smoke Alarms

- ◆ Smoke alarms installed on every level of your home dramatically increase your chances of survival.
- ◆ People with physical limitations should be aware of special fire safety devices that are available, such as smoke alarms with a vibrating pad or flashing light for the deaf and hard of hearing. In addition, smoke alarms with a strobe light outside the house can catch the attention of neighbors or others who might pass by.
- ◆ Smoke alarm batteries need to be tested every month and changed at least every six months. If you can't reach the test button on your smoke alarm, ask someone to inspect it for you.

Washington Military Department,
Emergency Management Division, 2002